

Traffic and Parking Committee Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, August 26, 2014
Rockport Police Station, Community Room

In Attendance: Tom McCarthy, Joe Parisi, Linda Sanders

Meeting Opened: 1:35 p.m.

Seagull Street – parking: Residents of the Seagull Street neighborhood attended the meeting to support resolving to the current parking concerns in the area. Ms. Jenna Olson wants a long term solution to the problems; she is concerned about children's safety with speeding that occurs in the area, primarily after school. She is also concerned about the street being blocked with the current parking on both sides of the street, she believes safety vehicles cannot fit up the street with the current parking congestion. Ms. Olson reported that the problem has increased over the last few years because of the increased number of school choice students being dropped off and picked up daily. Mr. Dennis Lovelace is also concerned about the two sided parking possibly blocking the road for the larger safety vehicles. He reported researching solutions to the parking and recommends parking on the right side of the road. He reported that the problem involves both high school students parking for the school day and parents picking up their children. Ms. Debra Hale requested "No Parking" on Seagull Street during the school hours. Mr. Ron Harnish discussed several problems including the school being a "terrible neighbor" and the general lack of respect that the residents have received from the students and parents. He asked for increased police surveillance in the area. Mr. Michael Josephson supports parking on one side of the street; delivery trucks have trouble moving through the congested street. He has concerns about the drainage eroding lawns in the area; this problem has increased since the street was repaved. Ms. Hale reported that a handicap resident has trouble getting past the parked cars to the CATA bus. Mr. James Reid supports right side only parking; he identified safety problems with the cars blocking visibility in the intersection. Mr. Lovelace asked the committee to research if the Town had the right of first refusal on the Horigan property which could be used to increase school parking. McCarthy plans to have an increased police presence at both ends of the school day for the start of the new school year. Speed limits are regulated by the Mass Department of Transportation and the speed limit is thirty (30) miles per hour or whatever is reasonable and safe. He does not anticipate that a speed study would impact that limit with MDOT because of the length of the roads involved. (The speed limit was recently lowered on Parker Street and new signs are posted.) Sanders will involve the school personnel in this discussion and invite them to the next meeting. The current regulations for high school parking will be reviewed with the principal; currently empty spaces have been frequently observed in the lot. Parisi moved to rescind the

previous meeting's vote to recommend to the Board of Selectmen "no parking" on the left side of the street; McCarthy seconded this motion and it was agreed; Sanders abstained because she did not participate in the original vote. McCarthy and Parisi will do a site visit to the area; the police department may use the temporary "no parking" cones to further assess the situation.

Old Harbor – parking: Mr. Arthur Holzman asked the board to consider moving the current location of the "No Parking" sign in the Old Harbor parking area. Since the wharf reconstruction, it is possible to safely create several new resident parking spaces on the right side of the lot. Currently the left side of the lot is for boat owners and the right side is for residents. McCarthy visited the site and agrees that parking can be increased; there is a need to allow space for a safe turn around area at the end of the lot. Sanders agreed to clarify the number of spaces currently needed for boat owners and the committee agreed to revisit this issue in the future. McCarthy motioned to move the existing sign on the right side of the lot twenty-four (24) feet in a westerly direction; Parisi seconded; the vote was unanimous. Parisi anticipates that this sign will be moved within the next several weeks.

Highland Street – parking: Ms. Thoma Robertson asked the board to consider delineating the end of Highland Street as a "No Parking" area due to the limited visibility in the intersection. This is an issue she had brought to this board many years ago. She reported that trucks can have difficulty with the turn onto Main Street because of the limited space in the intersection. McCarthy and Parisi agreed to do a site visit; Sanders then moved to use yellow hash marks to remove one space, location to be determined by the outcome of the site visit; Parisi seconded and the vote was unanimous.

New Issues: Unitarian Church – A parishioner requested three designated parking spaces for parishioners during Sunday services. Church members previously parked in the metered spaces behind the Carnegie Library which were removed several years ago when the building was converted to a private residence. She reported some members parked on Hale Street; but those spaces appear to be permanently occupied at this time. Creative alternative arrangements like a church "shuttle service" from the Town lot were discussed. The Committee agreed to review this item with more discussion at a future meeting.

Granite Street – by the Lobster Pool Restaurant: A neighbor reported speeding vehicles and continued parking issues in the area of the restaurant this summer. She asked for clarification of the speed limit in this section of Granite Street from the Gloucester line. McCarthy agreed to review the regulations and have officers investigate the parking problems in the area. The "No Parking" areas surrounding the restaurant on both sides of the street may need to be better identified.

Approval of the Minutes of the May 27, 2014 Meeting: Parisi moved to accept the minutes; McCarthy seconded; they voted to accept the minutes of the May 27, 2014 meeting. Sanders did not attend the May 27th meeting; therefore one abstention.

Forest Street and King Street – Intersection: No one provided additional information on this problem; this issue may have been related to the temporary construction. The committee clerk will attempt to contact the resident who initially raised this issue for further clarification.

Evans Way: Parisi reported that the DPW Commissioners have discussed the issues related to Evans Way, which is partially a private road. The street is too narrow to support designated parking spots. The DPW will be managing securing the gated entrance to the ball field at the request of the residents in the area. No further improvements to the road are planned at this time. No further action is required by this committee.

Adjournment: Parisi moved and McCarthy seconded to adjourn the meeting at 3:30 p.m.